

**Introduced by Senators Jackson, Beall, Block, Corbett, De León, DeSaulnier, Evans, Galgiani, Hancock, Hill, Lara, Leno, Liu, Pavley, Roth, Rubio, Steinberg, Wolk, and Yee**

January 31, 2013

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Senate Joint Resolution No. 2—Relative to violence against women.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SJR 2, as introduced, Jackson. Violence Against Women Act.

This measure would call on the United States Congress to pass the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2013, Senate Bill No. 47, authored by Senator Leahy, and ensure the sustainability of vital programs designed to keep women and families safe from violence and abuse.

Fiscal committee: no.

1 WHEREAS, The Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) was  
2 developed with the input of advocates from around the country  
3 and from all walks of life, and addresses the real and most  
4 important needs of victims of domestic violence, sexual assault,  
5 dating violence, and stalking. VAWA is responsive, streamlined,  
6 and constitutionally and fiscally sound, while providing strong  
7 accountability measures and appropriate federal government  
8 oversight; and  
9 WHEREAS, VAWA represents the voices of women and their  
10 families, and the voices of victims, survivors, and advocates; and  
11 WHEREAS, VAWA was first enacted in 1994, and has been  
12 the centerpiece of the federal government's efforts to stamp out  
13 domestic and sexual violence. Critical programs authorized under

1 VAWA include support for victim services, transitional housing,  
2 and legal assistance; and

3 WHEREAS, Domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence,  
4 and stalking, once considered private matters to be dealt with  
5 behind closed doors, have been brought out of the darkness; and

6 WHEREAS, VAWA has been successful because it has had  
7 consistently strong, bipartisan support for nearly two decades; and

8 WHEREAS, The Violence Against Women Reauthorization  
9 Act of 2013 will provide a five-year reauthorization for VAWA  
10 programs, and reduce authorized funding levels by more than \$135  
11 million, or 17 percent, from the law's 2005 authorization; and

12 WHEREAS, While annual rates of domestic violence have  
13 dropped more than 50 percent, domestic violence remains a serious  
14 issue. Every day in the United States, three women are killed by  
15 abusive husbands and partners. In California in 2010, there were  
16 166,361 domestic violence calls, including more than 65,000 that  
17 involved a weapon; and

18 WHEREAS, The Violence Against Women Reauthorization  
19 Act of 2013 includes several updates and improvements to the  
20 law, including the following:

21 (a) An emphasis on the need to effectively respond to sexual  
22 assault crime by adding new purpose areas and a 20-percent  
23 set-aside in the STOP (Services, Training, Officers, and  
24 Prosecutors) Violence Against Women Formula Grant Program  
25 (STOP Program) and a 25-percent set-aside in the Grants to  
26 Encourage Arrest Policies and Enforcement of Protection Orders  
27 Program.

28 (b) Improvements in tools to prevent domestic violence  
29 homicides by training law enforcement, victim service providers,  
30 and court personnel to identify and manage high-risk offenders  
31 and connecting high-risk victims to crisis intervention services.

32 (c) Improvements in responses to the high rate of violence  
33 against women in tribal communities by strengthening concurrent  
34 tribal criminal jurisdiction over perpetrators who assault Indian  
35 spouses and dating partners in Indian countries.

36 (d) Increased protections for vulnerable immigrant victims of  
37 domestic and sexual violence, ensuring protection for the children  
38 of victims and strengthening protections for women brought into  
39 the country by marriage brokers.

1 (e) Measures to strengthen housing protections for victims by  
2 applying existing housing protections to nine additional federal  
3 housing programs.

4 (f) Measures to promote accountability to ensure that federal  
5 funds are used for their intended purposes.

6 (g) Consolidation of programs and reductions in authorization  
7 levels to address fiscal concerns, and renewed focus on programs  
8 that have been most successful.

9 WHEREAS, There is a need to maintain services for victims  
10 and families at the local, state, and federal levels. Reauthorization  
11 would allow existing programs to continue uninterrupted, and  
12 would provide for the development of new initiatives to address  
13 key areas of concern. These initiatives include the following:

14 (a) Addressing the high rates of domestic violence, dating  
15 violence, and sexual assault among women 16 to 24 years of age,  
16 inclusive, by combating tolerant youth attitudes toward violence.

17 (b) Improving the response to sexual assault with best practices,  
18 training, and communication tools for law enforcement, as well  
19 as health care and legal professionals.

20 (c) Preventing domestic violence homicides through enhanced  
21 training for law enforcement, advocates, and others who interact  
22 with those at risk. A growing number of experts agree that these  
23 homicides are predictable, and therefore preventable, if we know  
24 the warning signs.

25 (d) Expanding the definition of “underserved” to encourage  
26 development of services for people who have had trouble getting  
27 help in the past; now, therefore, be it

28 *Resolved by the Senate and the Assembly of the State of*  
29 *California, jointly*, That the Legislature calls on the United States  
30 Congress to pass the Violence Against Women Reauthorization  
31 Act of 2013, Senate Bill No. 47, authored by Senator Leahy, and  
32 ensure the sustainability of vital programs designed to keep women  
33 and families safe from violence and abuse; and be it further

34 *Resolved*, That the Secretary of the Senate transmit copies of  
35 this resolution to the President and Vice President of the United  
36 States, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the Majority  
37 Leader of the Senate, each Senator and Representative from

- 1 California in the Congress of the United States, and to the author
- 2 for appropriate distribution.

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